

The Angel of Purgatory.

HOW MANY SWEET REMINISCENCES THIS TITLE
RECALLS TO A CHRISTIAN MIND.

The Voice of the Holy Souls.

"Mourn for the mourner, and not for the dead;
We are in sorrow, and they are at rest;
In the land of the living their portion is sure,
In the land of the dying we linger in dread;
Here the world and its dangers forever allure!
But the dead that die in the Lord are blest!"

Cease from your sorrowing, hearts that are breaking;
Hear the sad voices from Limbo's dark cell—
"Help us our brethern, who still have the power;
All self-love forgetting, your own griefs forsaking.
Remember the exiles who long for the hour
When safe in God's bosom forever they'll dwell.

"For Infinite Purity one must be pure—
Every spot is discerned by the All-seeing Eye.
All willing and gladly the soul wings her flight
To this 'Sojourn of Hope,' for there she is sure
The flame of the crucible, searching and bright,
Can alone make her worthy in God's light to lie,

"Then shorten our exile, O friends, whom we love,
Appease Heaven's justice with fast and with prayer.
Oh! ransom the captive with almsdeed's pure gold;
Her fetters unbind that with wings like a dove
She may fly to the throne where her name is en-
scribed,
And with saints clothed in white an immortal
crown wear."

Shall we not heed, then, the voice that is pleading
For prayers and for Masses, and offer our aid?
For them and for us the Sacred Heart bleeding,
In the desert, the garden, on Calvary prayed.
The soul to whom to-day our help is given
Will keep a loving trust with us some day in heaven.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and Purgatory.

The time-honored devotion to the Poor Souls is one that strikes a responsive chord in every heart attuned to the teachings and spirit of Holy Church. Nay, ages before the Church existed, save in figure and preparation, sorrow claimed the two-fold solace of prayerful tears—solace for them that are gone, and, flowing naturally from

the knowledge thereof, solace for them that linger still in the valley of the shadow of death. And to this day the Jews retain in their Liturgy the pious practice of praying for the dead, "that they may be loosed from their sins." Again, how many are not the Protestants who have been attracted to the study and profession of the Catholic Church's doctrines solely by her tenets regarding the souls of the just after death?

Now, if we, frail pilgrims in this transitory life, we whose charity is so cold and whose affections so inconstant, are thus instinctively drawn to the relief of the souls in Purgatory, how is it possible to form an adequate idea of the intensity of our Blessed Lady's yearning for the deliverance of her children from that dread place of expiation—those children whose salvation was purchased at so high a price by her Divine Son, those children, Jesus' dying bequest to her maternal love and tenderness?

She, herself once said to St. Bridget, "I am the Mother of all souls in Purgatory, since the pains they merit by reason of the sins they have committed during life are, as long as they remain in that place of suffering, hourly mitigated in some measure by my prayers." And the same saint one day heard Jesus saying to his Mother: "Thou art My Mother; thou art the Mother of mercy; thou art the consolation of the souls that are in Purgatory." On another occasion the Blessed Virgin made use of the following comparison: "As one confined to a bed of sickness is comforted by every word of consolation he hears, so they who suffer in Purgatory rejoice at the bare mention of my name."

All this Father Faber admirably expressed in one word, when he styled the Blessed Virgin the "Empress-Mother of Purgatory." A mother she is, in sooth, to the Poor Souls, by the love